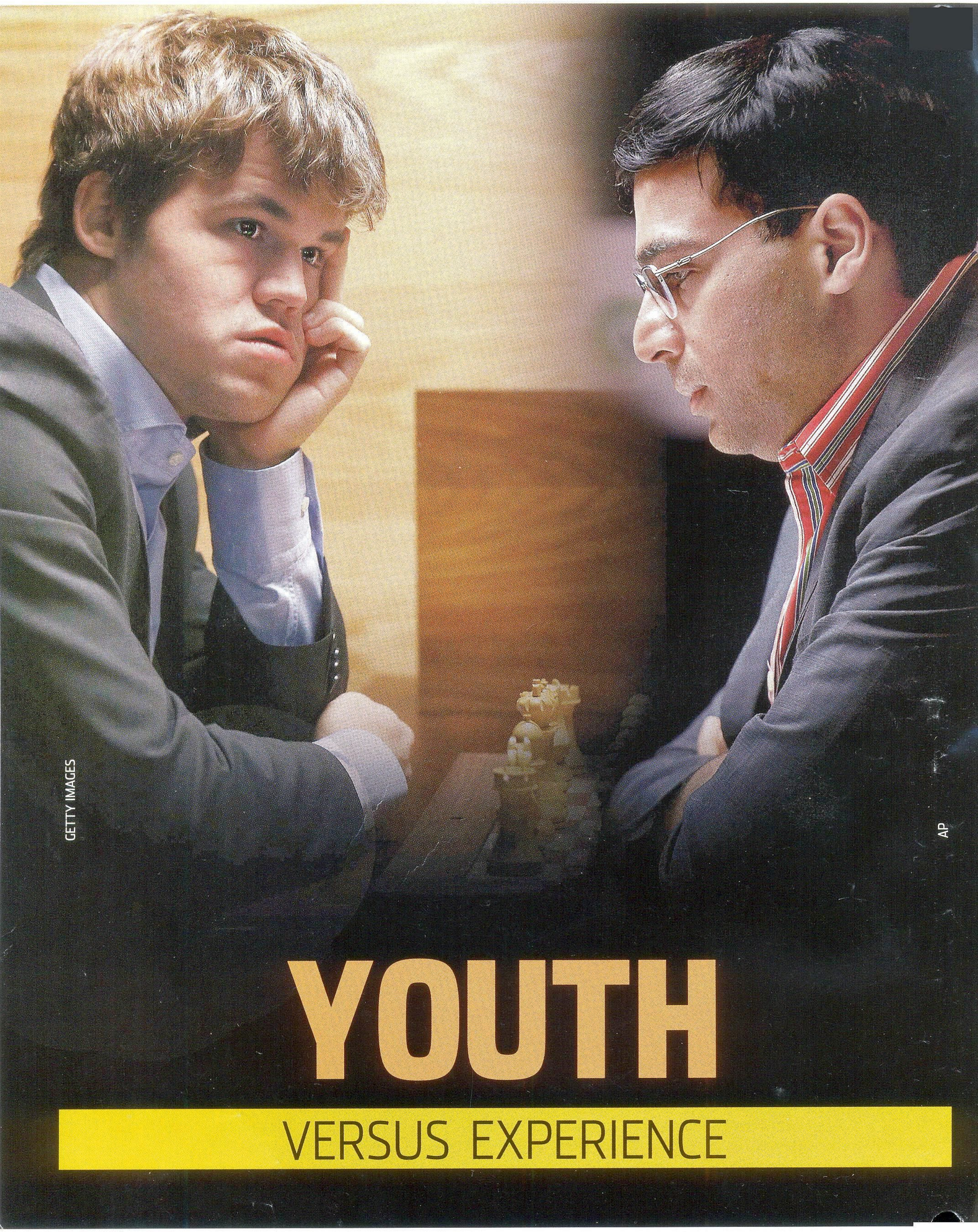
[redacted]

sportstar

[redacted]

VISWANATHAN ANAND & MAGNUS CARLSEN

FACE-OFF



GETTY IMAGES

AP

YOUTH

VERSUS EXPERIENCE

To win the World title, Magnus Carlsen, tipped as favourite, faces the reigning champion Viswanathan Anand, undefeated in **THREE TITLE-DEFENCES** in 'match-play' format. Carlsen has no experience of match-play at this level. This is one of the few factors likely to work against the 'favourite' for the title. By RAKESH RAO.

"I think being the World number one is a bigger deal than being the World Champion because I think it shows better who plays the best chess. That sounds self-serving but I think it's also right. I hope someday I'll become World Champion. But even if for some reason that doesn't happen, it won't stop me getting pleasure from chess. I'm sure of that.

— Magnus Carlsen in 2012

Much has happened since Magnus Carlsen expressed these views. At 22, this prodigious Norwegian is playing at a level never seen before. He has scaled the heights none of his great predecessors could.

As per international rating points, an indicator of an individual's playing strength, Carlsen tops the all-time list. His best of 2872 stands 21 points more than the previous record that stood in the name of the irrepressible Garry Kasparov. In fact, the Russian contributed to the rise of Carlsen by working with him in 2009.

TO WIN THE WORLD TITLE, Carlsen faces the reigning champion Viswanathan Anand, undefeated in three title-defences in 'match-play' format. Match-play involves two players facing each other in a pre-determined number of games. Carlsen has no experience of match-play at this level. This is one of the few factors likely to work against the 'favourite' for the title.

Going by the form shown by Carlsen in the past couple of years, a majority of chess followers are backing him to dethrone Anand. The obvious reason behind this thought is the stark contrast in the tournament results of the two players.

CARLSEN HAS WON SIX of the last nine tournaments. Anand has triumphed just once this year to end a title-drought that began in 2009. Here it is important to remember that, since 2007, when Anand regained the World title he won in 2000, he does not look as desperate to play and win tournaments like he once did. Sometimes, it appears as though he does not care for tournaments.

Since doing well in these tournaments enhances a player's rating, and with it the World rankings, Anand's ordinary showings coupled with the consistency of some younger players have seen him slip to the eighth spot in world rankings.

It is interesting to note that Anand has not gone out of the World's top-10 once he made it to the list in July 1991. At that time, Carlsen was just seven months old!

THE POINT ALSO ILLUSTRATES that Anand has been in the chess elite through the years that Carlsen has been on this planet. The experience of Anand, more so in handling match-play situations, could well be a factor when the two face-off in the 12-game battle in Chennai. Looking at the playing styles and strengths of the two, Anand's opening preparations are known to be superior to that of Carlsen's. The Indian can handle a variety of opening challenges, has a thorough understanding of the middle-game complications and

GOING BY THE FORM SHOWN BY CARLSEN IN THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, A MAJORITY OF CHESS FOLLOWERS ARE BACKING HIM TO DETHRONE ANAND. THE OBVIOUS REASON BEHIND THIS THOUGHT IS THE STARK CONTRAST IN THE URNAMENT RESULTS OF THE TWO PLAYERS.

Magnus Carlsen
NORWAY
Simonsen

enjoys a reputation of being very sound in defensive and endgame techniques.

CARLSEN, ON THE OTHER HAND, can play any position without appearing to be impressive in his opening lines, considered very crucial in the way a game turns out. But his 'feel' for any position is astounding. Given his youthful energy, Carlsen is not the one to agree to short draws. He is capable of playing dull, drab positions for hours while making moves of optimum strength. In equal position, Carlsen continues to play regardless of any apparent possibility of victory. Results have shown that many of his rivals have erred in long battles,

CARLSEN (ABOVE) IS NOT THE ONE TO AGREE TO SHORT DRAWS. HE IS CAPABLE OF PLAYING DULL, DRAB POSITIONS FOR HOURS WHILE MAKING MOVES OF OPTIMUM STRENGTH.

Viswanathan Anand

REUTERS

unable to concentrate in listless positions.

Therefore, the chess world expects Carlsen to play the waiting game and tire Anand out of the contest. This could be one of the ways of bringing pressure on the champion, who is well aware of his rival's ability to squeeze blood from stone.

ANAND NEEDS NO REMINDING the role peak fitness can play in a demanding match of this nature. He is believed to have lost a few kilograms through cycling and swimming as part of his training in Germany. But over the board, Anand is the one expected to create possibilities and do his bit to prevent the game from moving into Carlsen's comfort zone.

MUCH WILL DEPEND ON the opening preparations of the players, who are working with their team of 'seconds' — Grandmasters of reasonable strength but known for their expertise in certain areas of the game.

Opening moves that lead to sharp positions, which require precise calculations, should favour Anand. He is feared for his ability to calculate precisely in complicated positions. Carlsen, in contrast, has excelled increasingly in not-so-exciting positions.

Going by the head-to-head statistics, Anand has won six and lost three in decisive contests spread over 29 encounters. But the last two decisive results have favoured Carlsen. In fact, the last clash between the two this year saw Carlsen crush Anand in a short game.

ANAND MAY NOT ENJOY any home advantage but it remains to be seen how Carlsen deals with the conditions in Chennai. He is known to go for long walks during tournaments in Europe. Doing the same in rain and humid conditions of Chennai may be difficult. Given his love for the outdoor, Carlsen could find it tough if confined to the hotel for three weeks.

Overall, the result of this 'experience-versus-energy' clash could significantly impact the careers of the two path-breakers of their era.

OPENING MOVES THAT LEAD TO SHARP POSITIONS, WHICH REQUIRE PRECISE CALCULATIONS, SHOULD FAVOUR ANAND (ABOVE). HE IS FEARED FOR HIS ABILITY TO CALCULATE PRECISELY IN COMPLICATED POSITIONS.

CH. VIJAYA BHASKAR

> BY 2000, VISWANATHAN ANAND BECAME ONE OF THE MOST FORMIDABLE PLAYERS IN THE WORLD. HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED TO REMAIN THE SAME SIMPLE AND HUMBLE PERSON.
>
> **— PRAVIN THIPSAY**

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

'UNDISPUTED SUPREMO'

By winning the World title consecutively in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012, Vishy Anand has established himself as the **STRONGEST PLAYER OF ALL TIMES,** writes PRAVIN THIPSAY.

The 2000-2001 World Championship knockout was about to begin in New Delhi. Sixty-four top chess players from all parts of the world, including the top seed, Vishy Anand, and other bigwigs such as Adams, Shirov, Khalifman, Short, Ivanchuk, Topalov and Dreev had gathered in India's capital city, waiting for the pairing. A large group of Indian chess lovers and press were indeed thrilled to meet the cream of world chess for the first time. While we were waiting for the pairing to be displayed, the press started interviewing the participants and the question in everybody's lips was: "Who would be the champion?". Few hours later, GM Valery Salov, Vishal Sareen and I started going through the interviews. The verdict was absolutely unanimous — "Vishy Anand and only Vishy Anand!".

"Anand has already won the championship!" remarked Salov.

His prediction came true after a couple of weeks' intense battles for the crown.

INDEED, ANAND NOT ONLY WON the championship, but he did it with a bang by winning the final with a 3.5-0.5 score! There have been several world champions, but how many have had the distinction of being accepted as the undisputed best by their own rivals? Strangely, that had been the case with Vishy since his very childhood

AFP

THE GUJARAT CHIEF MINISTER, NARENDRA MODI, GREETS WORLD CHAMPION VISWANATHAN ANAND during the opening of 'Khel Mahakumbh', a sports event, in Ahmedabad in 2010. To Anand's right is Grandmaster Praveen Thipsay.

He had always been a supremo, and that too, the undisputed one!

Since the time I first saw Anand, his chess mastery made an unforgettable impression on me. It was in May 1983 that Anand had come to Mumbai for the first time to play in the National team championship. The venue was IIT Bombay, and it was excellent, but there was not a single hall big enough to accommodate all the participants. So the event was also held in adjacent halls. My elder brother and coach Abhay was playing the role of Tournament Director.

ONE DAY HE CAME HOME with an amazed and amused look on his face. He said, "Today a strange thing happened in the second hall. A well-known national player alleged that he had a faulty chess clock on his board. Halfway through the game, the player had apparently used 90 minutes while his young opponent had used hardly one or two! So, I decided to monitor it personally. And what did I see; a small boy from 'Madras Colts', who was making his moves

WHEN ANAND FIRST QUALIFIED FOR THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CANDIDATES' MATCHES IN 1991, HE HAD NO MATCH EXPERIENCE COMPARED WITH THE RUSSIANS. YET, HE WON THE EIGHT-GAME MATCH AGAINST ALEXEI DREEV OF RUSSIA IN JUST SIX GAMES — SOMETHING THAT WASN'T HEARD OF AT THAT LEVEL.

ON TOP OF THE WORLD... the World Chess Federation (FIDE) President, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, honours World champion Viswanathan Anand during an awards ceremony at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow in May 2012. The Indian Grandmaster defeated Israel's Boris Gelfand in a tiebreaker to retain his World title.

in just a second or two, had smashed this national player in less than three minutes of his time! You must see this wonder-kid!"

THE NEXT DAY I WENT TO SEE the wonder-kid; he was playing IM Manuel Aaron. A small, inexperienced lad, who had suddenly taken ill, was taking on a great champion. I had expected the game to go only one way but to my surprise, it went the other way from the very beginning! The boy went on to play fascinating chess against his famous opponent and win the game even before the other games had entered middle-game stage! That is the first time I saw the future world champion — "The Vishy Anand"!

The next year, as the National Champion, I accompanied Anand

IN 1987, ANAND BECAME THE FIRST ASIAN TO WIN A WORLD TITLE WHEN HE EMERGED WINNER IN THE WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES. HIS VICTORY OVER GM AGDESTEIN (COACH OF MAGNUS CARLSEN) WAS THE BEST GAME OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

REUTERS

IN THE 2003-2004 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CYCLE, ANAND WAS KEPT OUT BY TRICKY 'OFF THE BOARD' MOVES BY THE EUROPEAN CHESS FEDERATIONS. BUT THE CHAMPION DID NOT GRUMBLE. HE JUST WAITED FOR THE NEXT CYCLE. WHEN FIDE DECIDED TO HAVE THE 'UNIFICATION WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP' BY INCLUDING PCA (THE BREAKAWAY GROUP), ANAND WAS THE FIRST ONE TO WELCOME IT. THIS GAVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH HIS SUPERIORITY IN THE WORLD.

as his coach to the World Sub-Junior Championship in France. To my surprise, the boy did not seem to need any training! He just needed to discuss some critical positions and that was it. He would then just go and play. So impressed was Nona Gaprindashvili (former women's world champion) with Anand's game that she came to us one day just to tell me, "He is a very good player!"

THE FOLLOWING YEAR, the Indian team went to play the British Championship and Lloyds Bank Masters' Championship in London. As usual, the Indian contin- did extremely well, but the trip was really dominated by the youngest Indian — untitled Viswanathan Anand! His historic victory over former British Champion Grandmaster Jonathan Mestel made him a star overnight.

THE MOST STUNNING PART of the game was that Anand had consumed just 10 minutes of his time to win, while his mighty opponent was unable to hold the position despite consuming two hours and 28 minutes. The BBC interviewed Anand the same day and named him "The lightning kid".

In 1987, Anand became the first Asian to win a World title when he emerged winner in the World Junior Championship in the Philippines. His victory over GM Agdestein (coach of Magnus Carlsen) was the best game of the championship.

WHEN ANAND FIRST QUALIFIED for the World Championship candidates' matches in 1991, he had no match experience compared with the Russians. Yet, he won the eight-game match against Alexei Dreev of Russia in just six games — something that wasn't heard of at that level. In 1992, when Ivanchuk's Elo rating equalled that of Gary Kasparov, Anand was invited to play a short match with Ivanchuk in Moscow. Anand's easy 3-1 victory surprised the chess world, but those who really knew him had predicted this feat.

In 1995, just before the Kasparov-Anand match, I met former World No. 2 Viktor Korchnoi in Kishinev, Moldova. "I think it is time for a change," Korchnoi opined about the match. Sadly, it was not to be. However, the match taught Anand a lot. He learnt to study harder rather than depend on his instinct.

By 2000, Anand became one of the most formidable players in the world. However, he continued to remain the same simple and humble person despite his unparalleled glories. With Kasparov's retirement in 2003, it became clear that the chess world would be dominated by none other than Anand. Then came an unexpected jolt to his career. In the 2003-2004 World Championship cycle, Anand was kept out by tricky 'off the board' moves by the European Chess Federations.

BUT THE CHAMPION DID not grumble. He just waited for the next cycle. When FIDE decided to have the 'unification World Championship' by including PCA (the breakaway group), Anand was the first one to welcome it. This gave him an opportunity to establish his superiority in the world. By winning the World title consecutively in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012, Anand has established himself as the strongest player of all times.

(The author is a Grandmaster)

THE WORLD AT HIS FEET

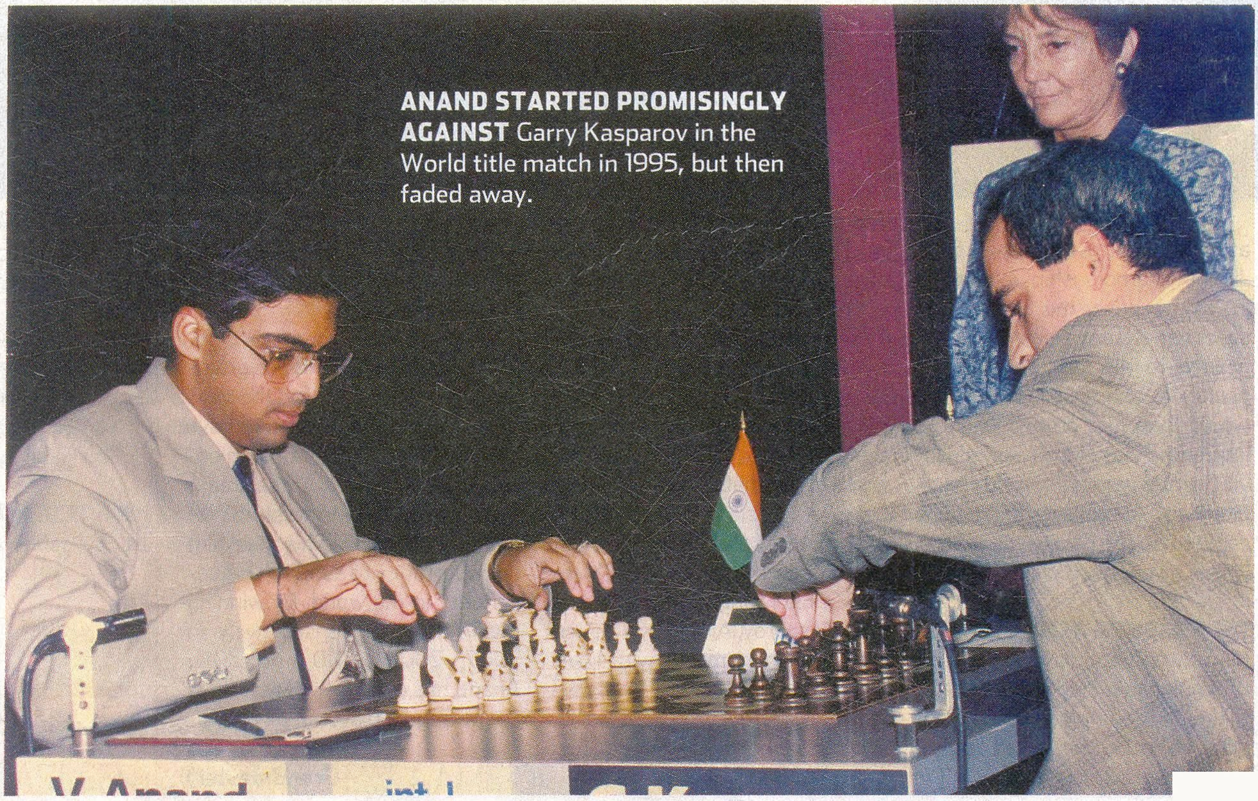
Viswanathan Anand's pursuit of the sport's **ULTIMATE PRIZE** began with the 1990-93 World Championship cycle, which ended in the quarter-final defeat to former World champion Anatoly Karpov in 1991. **RAKESH RAO** looks back.

CHESS

Every generation produces prodigious talents but not all realise the potential reflected in that initial promise. In a country bereft of world beaters in most individual sports, each time a young performer exceeds expectations, the question asked is whether the talent is good enough to bring home the World title.

Viswanathan Anand was one such exceptional talent. The promise he showed at sub-junior and junior levels made the chess world sit up and take note of his extraordinary skills. The 1987 World junior title only reinforced the growing belief in his abilities. In the space of five months, he became the country's first Grandmaster and ended the year on a high note.

ANAND'S PURSUIT of the sport's ultimate prize began with the 1990-93 World Championship cycle, which ended in the quarter-final defeat to former World champion Anatoly Karpov in 1991. In 1993, the chess world was split when former World champion Garry Kasparov broke away from the World Chess Federation (FIDE), and floated the Professional Chess Association (PCA). Anand took part in the 1993-95 PCA World Championship cycle and lost the final to



ANAND STARTED PROMISINGLY AGAINST Garry Kasparov in the World title match in 1995, but then faded away.

E HINDU PHOTO LIBRARY

sparov.

This loss was a shattering one for Anand, who had earlier lost in the concurrently played 1994-1996 FIDE World Championship to Gata Kamsky after reaching the threshold of a quarter-final victory at Sanghi Nagar.

ANAND'S SECOND WORLD 'title-clash' came against Karpov in January 1998, after he won the knockout phase to emerge as the challenger. An exhausted Anand left Groningen for Lausanne, where a well-rested Karpov eventually prevailed in the two tie-break games.

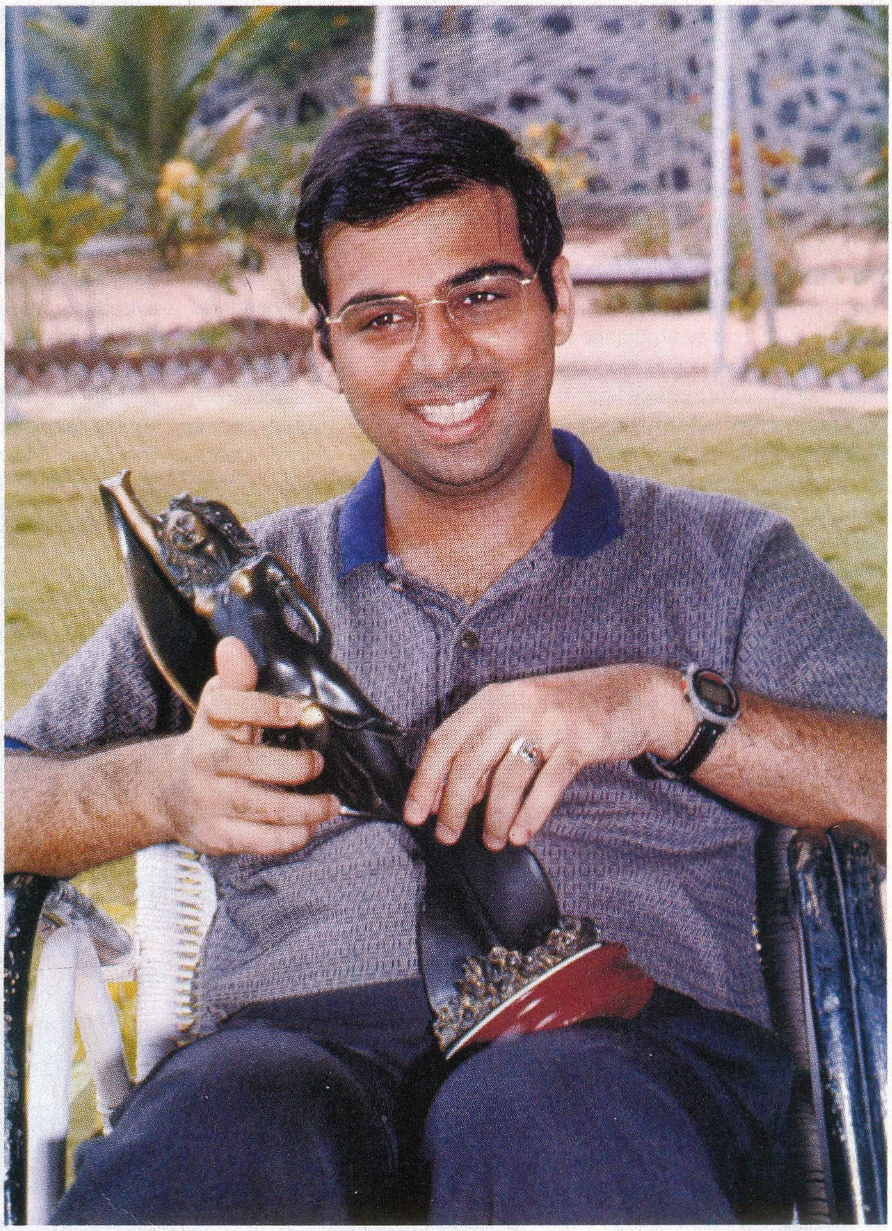
Anand's wait for the World title finally ended in 2000. New Delhi hosted the championship before the finalists flew to Teheran for the final. As the top seed, Anand sailed through the knockout format but lived dangerously against defending champion Alexander Khalifman in the quarter-finals. The narrow escape proved a wake-up call for Anand and he overpowered Michael Adams to face Alexie Shirov in the final. An inspired Anand destroyed Shirov 3.5-0.5, with two games to spare in their best-of-six games clash.

In 2001, Anand was dethroned in Moscow where he surrendered to Vassily Ivanchuk in the semi-finals. Thereafter, even as attempts for a unified World Championship continued, Anand took part in the 2005 edition at San Luis. He finished joint runner-up to Veselin Topalov in the eight-player double round-robin format.

IN 2007, THE BATTLE FOR THE undisputed World champion began in Mexico City, in a similar format seen in 2005. This time, Anand regained the title by remaining unbeaten in an elite field.

Like in 2000, when Anand's title did not earn him the respect reserved for a World champion; the triumph in 2007 in Mexico City also fell short of silencing his detractors. Many questioned the format to decide the World champion. The chess world, that followed the time-tested match-play format — where the champion faces a challenger — was not convinced that tournament format was the best way to find the World champion.

FINALLY, ANAND PROVED a point in



THE HINDU PHOTO LIIBRARY

VISWANATHAN ANAND AFTER WINNING THE FIDE WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP, IN TEHERAN, BEATING SPANISH GRANDMASTER ALEXEI SHIROV 3.5-0.5 ON DECEMBER 24, 2000. HE BECAME THE FIRST ASIAN TO WIN THE TITLE.

2008. In the best-of-12 games to decide the world title in Bonn, Anand defeated a previously-unbeaten Russia's Vladimir Kramnik, the man who had dethroned Garry Kasparov (2000) and kept the crown from Peter Leko (2004) and Veselin Topalov (2006).

THE CHESS WORLD FINALLY had an "undisputed" champion, though officially FIDE had awarded one to Anand in 2007. Having won the title in all three formats — knockout, tournament and match-play — Anand firmly established himself as the first universally accepted World champion since Kasparov in 1993.

But Anand was not done yet.

In 2010, he travelled to Sofia, in trying circumstances, to take on challenger Veselin Topalov. Anand who started with a defeat, defended the title with a victory in the 12th game. In a match for which Topalov is believed to have used ultra high-tech 'computer clusters' with mindboggling speeds, Anand found help from Kasparov, Kramnik, Magnus Carlsen and young Anish Giri, a rising GM from the Netherlands.

FOR ANAND, IF THERE WAS one bastion left to be conquered, it was winning in Russia, home land to several chess greats. Boris Gefland, formerly from Russia now representing Israel, was the challenger in Moscow and an obvious Russian interest ensured that India lost the bid to host the tie.

Anand, considered the favourite due to his superior rating and world ranking, struggled all the way. After six games, Gelfand won the seventh to lead. Anand hit back in the eighth, winning in just 17 moves; the shortest decisive game in the history of World Championship final. Rest of the games were drawn and Anand eventually emerged stronger in the tie-break rapid games.

A FIFTH WORLD TITLE placed Anand alongside the greats of the game. He now faces a new, young challenger in Carlsen, the highest ranked player in chess history. It will also be a clash where the World champion starts as an "underdog", a tag he does not seem to mind.

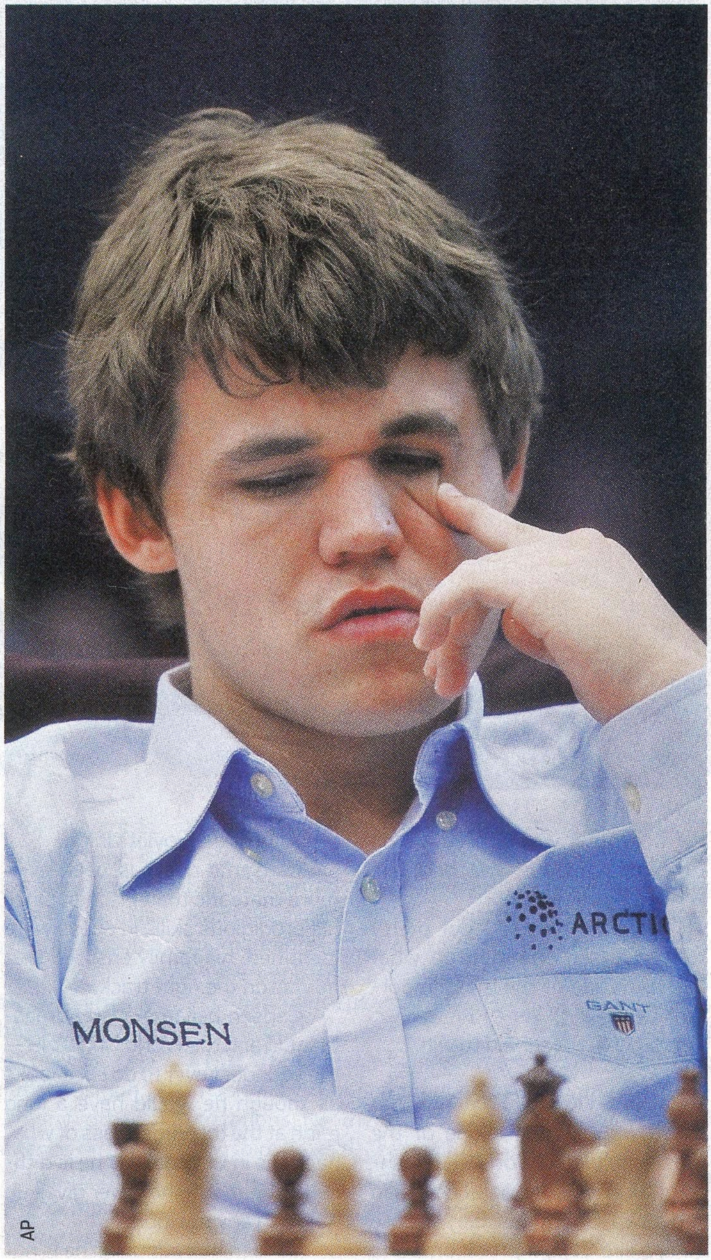
VISWANATHAN ANAND SHAKES HANDS WITH BORIS GELFAND of Israel after defeating him in the FIDE World Chess Championship tie-break match at Moscow's Tretyakovsky State Gallery.

B. GELFAND
2727
V. ANAND
2791
AP

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

PURE GENIUS

Magnus Carlsen became a Grandmaster at 13 and the World No. 1 at 19 — the youngest ever to do so. **HE IS DIFFICULT TO BEAT,** for he never gives up easily, in any position, writes P. K. AJITH KUMAR.



AP

MAGNUS CARLSEN... though only 22, he is the strongest player in the history of chess.

He has been voted one of the world's sexiest men by *Cosmopolitan* magazine. He has modelled with the Hollywood actress, Liv Tyler. He was offered a role in a *Star Trek* sequel. He has sponsorships worth millions. You won't normally read such things about a chess player, but then, Magnus Carlsen is no ordinary chess player.

He is only 22, but he is already the strongest player in the history of chess. The difference between him and the No. 2 player is huge. It is almost as if Carlsen is in another zone.

According to the latest Elo ratings released by FIDE, the world governing body of chess, the Norwegian has 2870 points (the highest in chess history is also held by Carlsen at 2872 points). The second-ranked Levon Aronian of Armenia has 2801, and he is 31 years old.

VISWANATHAN ANAND, who is playing Carlsen in the World Championship match in Chennai from November 9, has 2775 points. The Indian is one of the all-time legends of chess, with five World titles.

Carlsen himself is expected to win quite a few world titles before he makes the last move of his ca-

CLASSIC BATTLES

P. K. AJITH KUMAR looks back at some of the **GREAT MATCHES** fought for the World championship.

Bancaja
KARPO

FORMER WORLD CHAMPIONS Anatoly Karpov (left) and Garry Kasparov during an exhibition match in 2009. In 1984-85, Kasparov dethroned Karpov to become the youngest World champion.

The World chess championship has produced some truly unforgettable matches. Chess was of the highest quality in those matches. There was compelling drama, too. Those battles are forever.

Let us rewind some of the classics:

BORIS SPASSKY vs BOBBY FISCHER, 1972, REYKJAVIK

It remains the most talked-about match in history. At the height of the Cold War, a brilliant but temperamental American challenging the defending World champion from Russia was something the media could not have overlooked.

All the hype was justified though. Chess became a global sport only after this match in Iceland. But for a while it had looked as though the match would never take place. Fischer had demanded more money and he hadn't arrived when the inaugural ceremony was held. He didn't make an appearance until 10 minutes after Spassky made his first move in the opening game.

Fischer, the hot favourite, in fact lost that game. Then he forfeited the second game, because the authorities did not allow his demand to remove cameras, and he trailed the match 0-2.

Fischer did not take long to remind the world that he was a rare genius. He won the third game and then the fifth to level the scores at 2.5-2.5. He had to score 12.5 in the 24 games to wrest the crown from Spassky, who only needed to draw it 12-12 since he was the champion.

Fischer was in no mood to wait until the final game. He wrapped up the match by wining

KASPAROV
Bancaja
VALENCIA

AP

the 21st game, after the seven previous games were drawn. He won 12.5-8.5 and became the greatest star ever in chess.

ANATOLY KARPOV vs GARRY KASPAROV, 1984-85, MOSCOW

It was the mother of all matches. Champion Anatoly Karpov and challenger Garry Kasparov began their battle for the World title on September 10, 1984. It ended on November 9, 1985. Yes, it took a year and two months to find a winner. It also took two matches.

A second match was required because the first one was stopped in controversial circumstances. By the time the match was called off, 48 games had already been played, making it the longest match in history. The condition of the match was that the player who wins six games would be the champion.

Karpov seemed well on course to meet that target when he posted his fourth win in the ninth game. But his younger rival fought back, drawing the next 17 games. Then, Karpov won again, in Game 27. He went 5-0 up and he required just one more victory to retain his crown.

Kasparov then staged the most heroic fightback in the history of world championships

IN 1984-85 A SECOND MATCH BETWEEN ANATOLY KARPOV AND GARRY KASPAROV WAS REQUIRED BECAUSE THE FIRST ONE WAS STOPPED IN CONTROVERSIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE HINDU PHOTO LIBRARY

in any sport. He won Game 32 and then two more to make it 3-5. He may have been trailing, but the momentum was very much with him when the world chess governing body FIDE intervened and stopped the match saying the players were too weak to continue. Kasparov was furious. He knew Karpov was the establishment's favourite player.

It was decided the title would be decided in a rematch which would have only 24 games, with the challenger needing to score 12.5. That too turned out to be a well-fought match, with Kasparov winning 13-11. Karpov needed a win in the final game to keep his crown, but he lost. And Kasparov became, at 22, the youngest World champion ever, after playing 72 games.

MIKHAIL BOTVINNIK vs MIKHAIL TAL, 1960, MOSCOW

Mikhail Botvinnik had begun the great Russian revolution in chess when he won the World championship in 1948. He had retained his crown in 1951 and 1954 with victories against fellow Soviets David Bronstein and Vasily Smyslov, respectively. After losing it to Smyslov in 1957, he had regained it a year later.

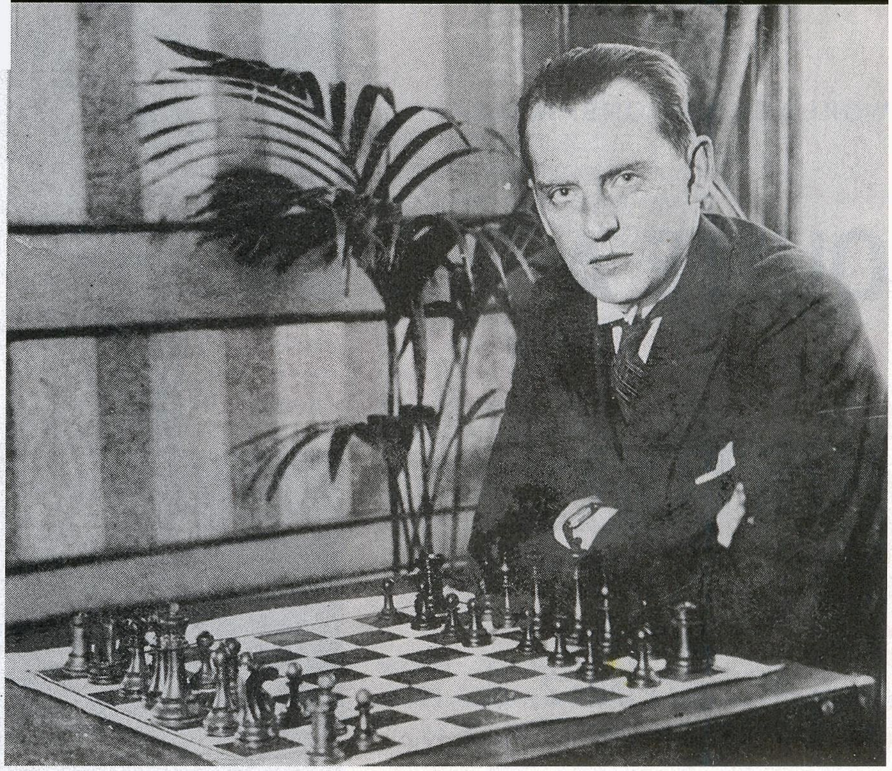
It was with such a wealth of experience that he went into the match against Mikhail Tal, his young compatriot. The challenger had earned his right the hard way, by winning a tough Interzonal and a tougher Candidates tournament, which had featured the likes of Paul

CHESS BECAME A GLOBAL SPORT ONLY AFTER THIS MATCH BETWEEN BORIS SPASSKY (ABOVE, LEFT) AND BOBBY FISCHER IN REYKJAVIK, IN 1972. FISCHER WON THE TITLE.

eres, Vasily Smyslov, Tigran Pe- osisan and a young Bobby Fischer.

Tal was known for his stunningly attacking chess. They called him the 'Magician from Riga.'

The big question was whether the magic would work against the stable, allround skills of Botvinnik. It worked, as Tal won the match convincingly, winning the best-of-24-games affair 12.5-8.5. He had begun with a victory in the very first game and was 5-2 up after seven games. He didn't disappoint his fans as he became, at the time, the youngest World champion, at the age of 23.


THE HINDU PHOTO LIBRARY

JOSE RAUL CAPABLANCA vs ALEXANDER ALEKHINE, 1927, BUENOS AIRES

When Soviet Union's Alexander Alekhine challenged Jose Raul Capablanca for the 1927 World title, not many gave him a chance. The general feeling was that he wasn't the most eligible contender, but only he could raise the resources for a match (FIDE hadn't begun conducting World championships yet).

Alekhine had never won a game against the charismatic Cuban, who was the winner of five of their seven previous meetings prior to the World championship. Some of the leading players of the day predicted Alekhine would not win even a single game. And the condition was that six wins were required to win the title.

But Alekhine had the last laugh, when he won the 34th game. He had begun on the right note, winning the first game with black pieces. He won the match 18.5-13.5. He won six games and Capablanca three. It was one of the biggest upsets in the history of the World chess championship.

VISWANATHAN ANAND vs VESELIN TOPALOV, 2010, SOFIA

In 2008, Viswanathan Anand won his third World title when he defeated Russia's Vladimir Kramnik. Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria became the Indian's challenger for the 2010 World championship after beating Gata Kamsky of the United States.

The match would be played in Topalov's hometown. Anand could not have foreseen that it would take him so much trouble just to reach the place, let alone defend his title.

A volcanic eruption in Iceland ruined Anand's travels plans and he was stranded in Frankfurt. There were no flights and he had to travel by road. He arrived five days after the date he was scheduled to reach. His request to postpone the match was refused by the organisers, who allowed him just one day.

It was in such trying circumstances that the champion began his campaign. And he lost in the opening game of the best-of-12 match. He came roaring back in the very next game though and went ahead after Game Four. At the half-way mark he was leading 3.5-2.5. But the local boy equalised by winning the eight game and the scores were level 5.5-5.5 going into the final game. A draw would have made it 6-6 and the match would have required the tie-breakers with rapid games. Anand ensured that there was no need for that, as he scored an unforgettable win with black pieces.

WHEN SOVIET UNION'S ALEXANDER ALEKHINE (ABOVE) CHALLENGED JOSE RAUL CAPABLANCA FOR THE 1927 WORLD TITLE, NOT MANY GAVE HIM A CHANCE, BUT HE CAUSED ONE OF THE BIGGEST UPSETS.

QUITE A FASCINATING HISTORY

WILHEM STEINITZ, who is considered the father of modern chess, was the first ever World champion in 1886. Here, **P. K. AJITH KUMAR** traces the history of World Championship.

Pics: THE HINDU PHOTO LIBRARY

AFTER MIKHAIL BOTVINNIK'S VICTORY in the 1948 World Championship, a chess revolution began in Russia.

Some 127 years ago, Wilhem Steinitz defeated Johan Zukertort to become the first World chess champion. The World chess championship has indeed a long history — not many games could boast a World championship that is well over a century old — and many fascinating tales to tell.

A spirited comeback was witnessed in the first ever World Championship, staged in 1886, in the American cities of New York, St. Luis and New Orleans, as Steinitz was trailing 1-4 before winning the 20-game match 12.5-7.5. The Austrian won 10 games, while his Polish born rival Zukertort won five. Steinitz was a worthy World champion and the first great systematic thinker of the game; he is considered the father of modern chess. He defended his title against Mikhail Tchigorin of Russia in 1889 and 1892 and against Hungarian Isidor Gunsburg in 1890.

IN 1894 THOUGH, he lost the crown to Germany's Emmanuel Lasker, (7-12) who became the second World champion; there were just four draws in the 19-game match. The German, who had a doctorate in mathematics, kept the title for 27 years, the longest period by any World champion.

AFTER HIS SUCCESSFUL TITLE defences against Steinitz, Frank Marshall, Siegbert Tarrasch, Dawid Janowski and Carl Schlechter, Lasker finally met his match

Jose Raul Capablanca, the first superstar of chess. The handsome Cuban had a charisma that went beyond the chessboard. In 1921, he won the World title in his hometown of Havana, without losing a single game to Lasker, who conceded after 14 games, trailing at 5-9.

ALEXANDER ALEKHINE became the next World champion when he shocked Capablanca 18.5-15.5 in 1927. One of the greatest of all World champions, the Russian defended his title against Efim Bogoljubov in 1929 and 1934, but a year later, he lost it, surprisingly, to Max Euwe, a mathematics teacher from Netherlands. In 1937, however, he regained the title from Euwe.

Battles of a more serious nature pushed chess off the priority list as the world went to war in 1939. By the time the Second World War had ended, Alekhine had died, in 1946, and a new way had to be found to decide the sixth World champion. The world chess governing body FIDE thus came up with a round-robin tournament in 1948 featuring five of the leading players then, Euwe, Samuel Reshevsky of the United States and three Russians, Mikhail Botvinnik, Vasily Smyslov and Paul Keres.

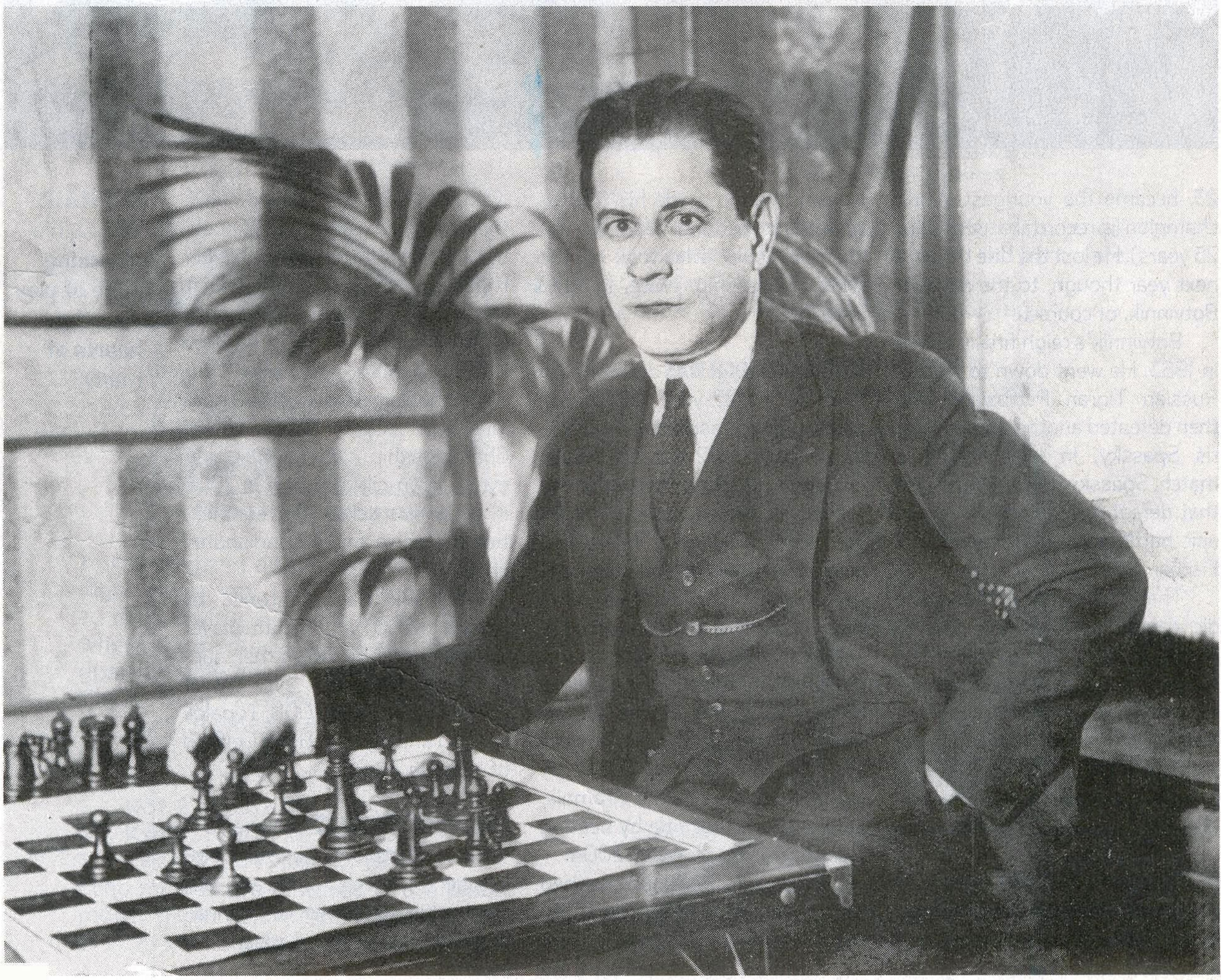
Botvinnik won the tournament convincingly, scoring three points more than his nearest rival Smyslov. Thus began the Russian revolution in chess.

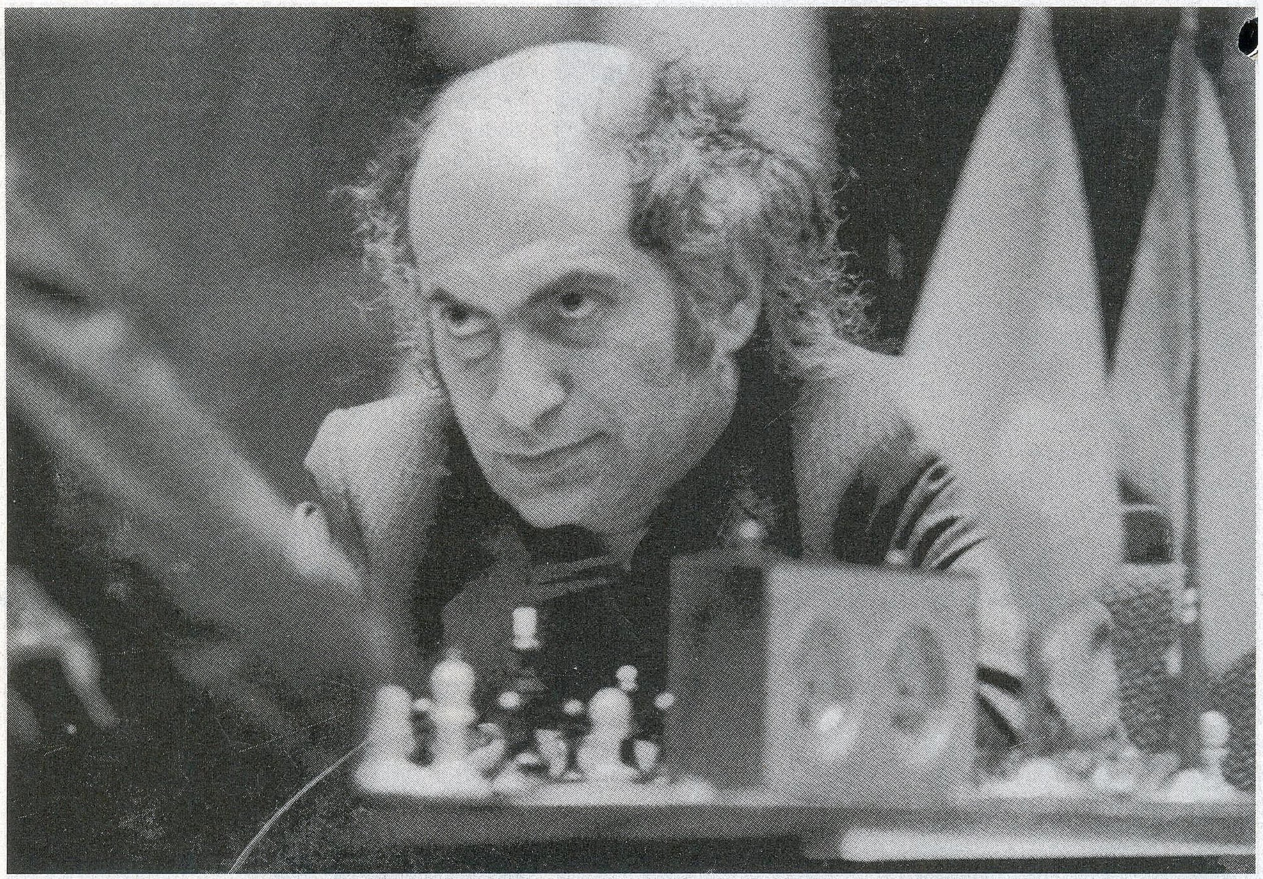
FOR THE FIRST TIME, a proper system to identify the challenger was also put in place after the 1948 world championship. David Bronstein of the Soviet Union emerged as the contender for the 1951 World Championship match against compatriot Botvinnik, who retained his crown after the match ended 12-12 (the champion needed only to draw, while the challenger had to win).

It was a close shave for Botvinnik again, in 1954, when he was held 12-12 by Symslov. Three years later though, Symslov, who was also a talented opera singer, hummed a tune of revenge, beating Botvinnik 12.5-9.5 to become the seventh World champion. He could hold the crown only for a year though, as he lost to Botvinnik in 1958.

MIKHAIL TAL BECAME the next champion and he still is one of the most loved legends of all time for his attacking game. He defeated Botvinnik 12.5-8.5 in 1960 and at

JOSE RAUL CAPABLANCA, the first superstar of chess.





MIKHAIL TAL... his attacking style of play won the hearts of many.

23, became the youngest World champion (a record that stood for 25 years). He lost the title the very next year though, to the resilient Botvinnik, of course.

Botvinnik's reign finally ended in 1963. He went down to fellow-Russian Tigran Petrosian, who then defeated another Soviet, Boris Spassky, in the 1966 title match. Spassky however avenged that defeat in 1969 to set-up his epic battle with American Bobby Fischer in 1972.

That match, held in the Icelandic capital of Reykjavik, was a game-changer. Fischer, the greatest personality in world chess ever, won that Cold War, 12.5-8.5, and inspired people across the world to learn the game. He also brought an end to the 24-year domination of the Russians.

HE, HOWEVER, REFUSED to defend the title in 1975, as Anatoly Karpov brought the crown back to the Soviet Union without playing a game. Karpov though made his title legitimate by beating Viktor Korchnoi, the Soviet who took up the Swiss citizenship, twice, in 1978 and 1981.

KARPOV THOUGH WAS dethroned in 1985 by his 22-year-old compatriot, Garry Kasparov, who triumphed after 72 games, spread over two matches. Kasparov defended his crown against Karpov in 1986, 1987 and 1990 and proved that he was the strongest player of all time. He then broke away with FIDE and conducted — and won — his own World championships, against England's Nigel Short (1993) and India's Viswanathan Anand (1995). He, however, was shocked in 2000 by fellow-Russian Vladimir Kramnik, who retained that title by beating Hungary's Peter Leko in 2004.

Meanwhile, FIDE had crowned Karpov in 1993, 1996 and 1998; the challengers, respectively, were Jan Timman (Netherlands), Gata Kamsky (US) and Anand. FIDE then switched its format to knockout, in which Russia's Alexander Khalifman (1999), Anand (2000), Ukraine's Ruslan Ponomariov (2002) and Uzbekistan's Rustam Kasimdzhanov (2004) triumphed. Bulgarian Veselin Topalov won the 2005 World Championship, an eight-player event. Kramnik beat him in 2006 in what was called the reunification match to find an undisputed champion.

Kramnik was dethroned by Anand in 2007 in an eight-player tournament. The Indian then successfully defended his crown against Kramnik in 2008, Topalov in 2010 and against Boris Gelfand of Israel in 2012.

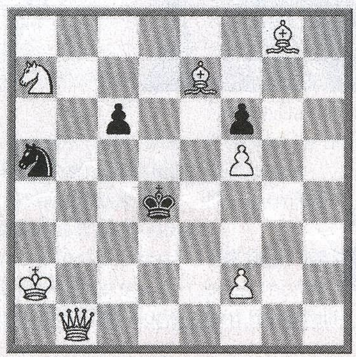
THE STAGE IS NOW SET for the 2013 World Championship, from November 9, which Anand will defend in his hometown of Chennai, against Magnus Carlsen of Norway.

Model mates

By C. G. S. Narayanan

A model mate is a mating position in which no square in the black king's field is guarded more than once by white and no square is guarded by white and simultaneously blocked by black, and in which all the white men on the board, with the exception of king and pawns, play some active part in the mate by guarding squares. The interest in a model-mate problem lies in the attractive mating positions. Model mates have very little scope in the two-mover but in the three and longer movers they are combined with strategic content.

G. Heathcote
I Pr, Bristol Mercury 1890



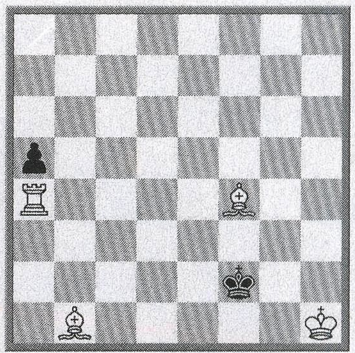
Mate in three moves

In the diagram above, after the good flight giving key 1.Bd5!, the defences 1...cxd5 and Nc4 lead to model mates where each square in the king field is guarded only once. The variation

Key:1. Bd5! [2.Qe4+Kc3 3. Bb4#]
1... cxd5 2. Nb5+ Kc4 3. Qf1#
(2... Ke5 3. Bd6)
1... c5 2. Bxf6+Kxd5 3. Qd3#
1... Nc4 2. Sxc6+Kxd5 3. Qh1#
1... Kxd5 2. Qd3+Ke5 3. Bd6#
1. ... Kc3 2. Bb4+Kd4 3. Qe4#

Echo models are featured in the four-mover given below. The key is 1.Bf5! If 1...Kf3 then 2.Kg1 Ke2 3.Bc2 Kf3 4.Bd1, a model mate. The solver should note the relative positions of the white and bishops before considering rook the second variation. The reason is that after 1....Kf1 2.Bg4 Kf2 3.Bd2 Kg3 4.Be1,the position of the three pieces in question is echoed.

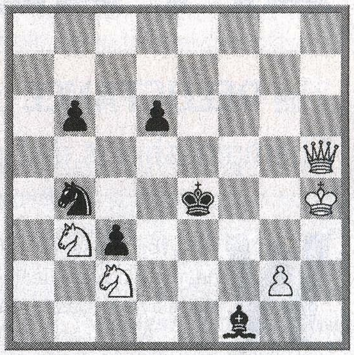
O. Wurzburg
1st Pr, Cheney Miniature Ty 1937



Mate in four moves

Echoed lines in which the king ends up on squares of different colours, as here, are known as Chameleon echoes.
Now for an echo-model for solving.

W. A. Shinkman
I Pr, St. John's Globe 1891



Mate in three moves

Solution to Loyd's problem in 'Castling in problems' article:
1.Rf4! waiting 1...Kxg3 2.0-0 Kh3 3.R(1)f3 mate.1...Kxh1 2.Kf2 Kh2 3.Rh4 mate